



POINTER VERSION 2.0 **PRODUCT SPECIFICATION 2008** **VERSION 1.0**



Land &
Property
Services®

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2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 POINTER

Pointer is the address database for Northern Ireland is maintained by Land & Property Services (LPS), with input from Local Councils and Royal Mail (RM). This is now the common standard address for every property in Northern Ireland.

It is important to note that Pointer is a dataset for addressable buildings in Northern Ireland.

Each building has a [UNIQUE BUILDING ID](#), which uniquely identifies a Primary Addressable Object (PAO). A PAO is defined as the 'physical footprint', i.e. the building shell.

Each property has a Unique Property Reference Number ([UPRN](#)). The [UPRN](#) represents the Secondary Addressable Object ([SAO](#)) e.g. a residence or business within a building.

Pointer has been allocated a set of [UPRNs](#) from the national hub, which are allocated to all addresses within the dataset. This will ensure consistency of [UPRNs](#) across Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

Pointer will be the key to accessing property related data held by multiple organisations from a single point.

Each building will be assigned a geographic position ([X_COR](#) and [Y_COR](#)) and a postal address.

2.2 THIS DOCUMENT

This document is a technical specification and provides detailed information on the fields contained within the POINTER product.

3 FIELD SPECIFICATION

The following table outlines the field types and sizes.

POINTER FIELD NAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TYPE	SIZE
ORGANISATION_NAME	ROYAL MAIL	Alphanumeric	60
SUB_BUILDING_NAME	LOCAL COUNCIL	Alphanumeric	60
BUILDING_NAME	LOCAL COUNCIL	Alphanumeric	70
BUILDING_NUMBER	LOCAL COUNCIL	Alphanumeric	20
PRIMARY_THORFARE	LOCAL COUNCIL	Alphanumeric	60
ALT_THORFARE_NAME1	LOCAL COUNCIL	Alphanumeric	60
SECONDARY_THORFARE	LOCAL COUNCIL	Alphanumeric	60
LOCALITY	LOCAL COUNCIL	Alphanumeric	40
TOWNLAND	LPS	Alphanumeric	40
TOWN	LOCAL COUNCIL	Alphanumeric	40
COUNTY	LPS	Alphanumeric	40
POSTCODE	ROYAL MAIL	Alphanumeric	8
BLPU	LPS	Integer	12
UNIQUE_BUILDING_ID	LPS	Integer	12
UPRN	LPS	Integer	12
USRN	LPS	Integer	10
LOCAL_COUNCIL	LPS	Alphanumeric	40
X_COR	LPS	Number	6
Y_COR	LPS	Number	6
TEMP_COORDS	LOCAL COUNCIL	Alphanumeric	1
BUILDING_STATUS	ALL (LIFECYCLE)	Alphanumeric	40
ADDRESS_STATUS	ALL (LIFECYCLE)	Alphanumeric	11
CLASSIFICATION	LAND & PROPERTY SERVICES	Alphanumeric	20
CREATION_DATE	LOCAL COUNCIL	Date	11
COMMENCEMENT_DATE	LOCAL COUNCIL	Date	11
ARCHIVED_DATE	ALL (LIFECYCLE)	Date	11
ACTION	SYSTEM GENERATED	Alphanumeric	1

4 DEFINITIONS

This chapter explains the content of the Pointer fields.

4.1 ORGANISATION_NAME

Definition

The trading or business name of an organisation within an addressable property.

Constraints

Population of this field is optional.

This field is updated with data supplied by Royal Mail where applicable. Use of this field incurs a Royal Mail licence fee.

Details

ATTRIBUTE	EXAMPLE 1	EXAMPLE 2
ORGANISATION_NAME	BRITISH MIDLANDS INTERNATIONAL	CAUSEWAY ORTHODONTIC CENTRE
SUB_BUILDING_NAME		UNIT 12
BUILDING_NAME		SANDEL VILLAGE CENTRE
BUILDING_NUMBER	14	67
PRIMARY_THORFARE	SYDENHAM BY-PASS	KNOCKLYNN ROAD
ALT_THORFARE_NAME1		
LOCALITY	GEORGE BEST BELFAST CITY AIRPORT	
TOWNLAND	SYDENHAM	Knockantern
TOWN	BELFAST	COLERAINE

4.2 SUB_BUILDING_NAME

Definition

The name or number of a flat, apartment or unit within an entire building identifying a Secondary Addressable Object (SAO). This name or number should be prefixed by the following 'UNIT', 'FLAT', 'APARTMENT' etc

Constraints

Population of this field is optional except in the cases below.

Population of this field is mandatory where:

- a building has more than one occupier and
- an organisation name does not exist.

Details

The use of SUB_BUILDING_NAME applies to flats, apartments, blocks, floors, maisonettes, suites or units located within a building.

ATTRIBUTE	EXAMPLE 1	EXAMPLE 2
ORGANISATION_NAME		CAUSEWAY ORTHODONTIC CENTRE
SUB_BUILDING_NAME	FLAT B	UNIT 12
BUILDING_NAME		SANDEL VILLAGE CENTRE
BUILDING_NUMBER	24	67

PRIMARY_THORFARE	MILL STREET	KNOCKLYNN ROAD
ALT_THORFARE_NAME1		
LOCALITY		
TOWNLAND	CUSHENDALL	Knockantern
TOWN	CUSHENDALL	COLERAINE

4.3 BUILDING_NAME

Definition

A name given to a building – the physical structure to which the address belongs.

Constraints

Population of this field is optional. Not all historical records, which have a BUILDING_NAME, will have a building number. All new records, which contain a BUILDING_NAME, will have a building number.

Details

When an organisation vacates a building, the Building Name may remain.

ATTRIBUTE	NEW SPEC EXAMPLE	HISTORIC EXAMPLE (no number)
ORGANISATION_NAME		
SUB_BUILDING_NAME	APARTMENT 4	
BUILDING_NAME	LANSDOWNE MANOR	HILL CROFT SPECIAL SCHOOL
BUILDING_NUMBER	2	
PRIMARY_THORFARE	LANSDOWNE CRESCENT	ABBOTS ROAD
ALT_THORFARE_NAME1		
LOCALITY		
TOWNLAND	PORTRUSH	WHITEABBEY
TOWN	PORTRUSH	NEWTOWNABBEY

4.4 BUILDING_NUMBER

Definition

A number associated with a building.

Constraints

Population of this field is optional.

The Building_Number will appear as entered by the Local Council. Previously not all Councils allocated a building number for properties in rural areas.

A Building Number may be singular, for example, 1, 11, 111 or a number range, for example, 1-11 or 1A-2A (without spacing).

Building Numbers with letter suffixes are valid, for example 1A.

Building Numbers must always be held as a numeric format ie 72A not Seventy-Two A.

4.5 PRIMARY_THORFARE

Definition

The name of the thoroughfare on which the building is located or the main access point on which it is located.

Constraints

Population of this field is mandatory.

Details

The spelling and punctuation of thoroughfare names are supplied by the Local Councils.

Thoroughfare descriptors, for example, road and street are not abbreviated – they are always shown in full.

It should be noted that one Local Council (Fermanagh) does not name thoroughfares in rural areas.

4.6 ALT_THORFARE_NAME1

Definition

A locally known alternative or an official thoroughfare name in another language, see Appendix I. In Northern Ireland only Irish or Ulster-Scots languages are used by the Street Naming Authorities. These names are only adopted into Pointer once approved by the Local Council.

Constraints

Population of this field is optional. An ALT_THORFARE_NAME1 will only be permitted for use where a [PRIMARY_THORFARE](#) also exists for a building.

ATTRIBUTE	EXAMPLE 1	EXAMPLE 2
ORGANISATION_NAME		
SUB_BUILDING_NAME		
BUILDING_NAME		
BUILDING_NUMBER	3	16
PRIMARY_THORFARE	SHESKIN PARK	HARBOUR ROAD
ALT_THORFARE_NAME1	PÁIRC AN SEASCINN	THE HARBOUR
LOCALITY		
TOWNLAND	Greestee Beg	PORTRUSH
TOWN	GREYSTEEL	PORTRUSH

4.7 SECONDARY_THORFARE

Definition

This field is used to better identify an address; it will be the main road off which the [PRIMARY_THORFARE](#) is located.

Constraints

Population of this field is optional and is at the discretion of the Local Council.

ATTRIBUTE	EXAMPLE 1	EXAMPLE 2
ORGANISATION_NAME		
SUB_BUILDING_NAME		
BUILDING_NAME		OAKLEE HOUSING
BUILDING_NUMBER	2	1
PRIMARY_THORFARE	BRENDARRAGH TERRACE	JAMES COURT
SECONDARY_THORFARE	UPPER SPRINGFIELD ROAD	KANSAS AVENUE
LOCALITY		
TOWNLAND	HANNAHSTOWN	SKEGONEILL
TOWN	BELFAST	BELFAST



4.8 LOCALITY

Definition

A locality is a named area, which does not necessarily fit into the definition of a town. A primary locality is typically a suburb of a city or town.

A locality can also be an industrial estate, business centre, business park or hospital complex.

Constraints

The LOCALITY field is related to the [TOWN](#) field; at least one of these fields must be populated, or both may be populated.

4.9 TOWNLAND

Definition

The name of the townland within which the building is located.

Constraints

Population of this field is mandatory.

The system generates Townland details for new and changed address records, using OSNI Largescale townland boundary dataset.

Details

Townland names are not unique either within a County or Administrative area.

The scale of the county boundary dataset is 1:2,500. This represents a change from earlier datasets that were based on 1:50,000 scale.

4.10 TOWN

Definition

The name of a settlement, within which the building is located.

Constraints

Population of this field is at the discretion of the Local Council

Details

The TOWN field is related to the [LOCALITY](#) field; at least one of these fields must be populated, or both may be populated.

4.11 COUNTY

Definition

The name of the County, as defined by LPS, within which the [PAO](#) is located.

Constraints

Population of this field is mandatory.

The system generates County details for new and changed records, using the OSNI largescale county boundary dataset.

Details

The scale of the county boundary dataset is 1:2,500. This represents a change from earlier datasets that were based on 1:50,000 scale.

There are currently 6 geographic county boundaries in Northern Ireland:

- Antrim
- Armagh
- Down
- Fermanagh
- Londonderry
- Tyrone

4.12 POSTCODE

Definition

A set of characters identifying a group of postal delivery points, defined by Royal Mail, to facilitate the sorting and delivery of mail.

Constraints

Population of this field is not mandatory as an address is created by Local Councils, however all addresses will receive a POSTCODE as part of its lifecycle. Use of this field incurs a Royal Mail licence fee.

4.13 BLPU

A subgroup of the Pointer Stakeholder Forum is involved in the specification, creation and lifecycle of a Basic Land and Property Unit (BLPU) for the whole of Northern Ireland. This group includes Councils, the Planning Service, Roads Service and Land & Property Services.

It is hoped that this dataset will be created and added to Pointer by 2010.

4.14 UNIQUE_BUILDING_ID

Definition

A 12-digit non-intelligent sequential number, which uniquely identifies a **Primary Addressable Object** (PAO). A PAO is defined as the 'physical footprint', i.e. the building shell.

Constraints

Population of this field is mandatory.

This number will be permanently associated with the PAO i.e. throughout the POINTER Address Lifecycle.

Details

A UNIQUE_BUILDING_ID will be assigned either upon its creation in Pointer or upon creation within a Local Council's database.

A UNIQUE_BUILDING_ID can relate to one or many [UPRN](#)s but it will have only one Building Name

and/or Building Number.

If a building is sub-divided into a number of separate units that are new PAOs, the UNIQUE_BUILDING_ID for the original building will be archived and new UNIQUE_BUILDING_IDs will be assigned.

If a building is sub-divided into a number of separate units that are new SAOs, the UNIQUE_BUILDING_ID for the building will remain the same and new UPRNs will be assigned.

If a number of UNIQUE_BUILDING_IDs are subsumed into a single PAO, then the UNIQUE_BUILDING_ID for the original buildings will be archived and a new UNIQUE_BUILDING_ID will be assigned.

If an existing building is demolished and new property/ies are built on the site, each new building will be assigned a new UNIQUE_BUILDING_ID and the previous UNIQUE_BUILDING_ID will be archived.

4.15 UPRN

Definition

Unique Property Reference Number. A 12-digit non-intelligent sequential number, which uniquely identifies a Secondary Addressable Object (SAO). An SAO covers such items as units, flats, or organisations within a building.

Constraints

Population of this field is mandatory.

This number will be permanently associated with the SAO i.e. throughout its lifecycle. For where an SAO has been duplicated by different organisations, this will be matched to an existing UPRN.

The system generates this attribute automatically.

Details

The data structure of Pointer will enforce the allocation of a minimum of one UPRN to every building. Therefore each building will have at least one UPRN.

If a building is sub-divided into a number of separate units (SAOs) which are new rateable hereditaments and/or postal delivery points, the UNIQUE_BUILDING_ID will remain, the existing UPRN will be archived, and new UPRNs will be assigned to each of the SAOs within the building.

If a number of SAOs are subsumed into a single occupancy building, then the UPRNs for the original properties will be archived, and a new UPRN will be allocated. The original UNIQUE_BUILDING_ID will be retained.

4.16 USRN

Definition

Unique Street Reference Number. Up to a 10-digit number that will uniquely identify each Primary Thoroughfare in Pointer.

Constraints

Population of this field is mandatory.

Details

Uniquely identifies each street (where there is more than one street with the same name).

In the instances where the numbering sequence reiterates along the same named road, separate Primary Thoroughfare Ids are attributed for each iteration e.g. Antrim Road, Belfast (Primary_Thorfare_Id 2540), currently runs up to number 783 before becoming Antrim Road, Newtownabbey (Primary_Thorfare_Id 26882).



4.17 LOCAL_COUNCIL

Definition

The name of the administrative area (Local Council) in which the building exists.

Constraints

Population of this field is mandatory.

The system will generate Local Council details for new and changed records, using the OSNI Largescale ward boundary dataset.

Local Councils are contained in [Appendix II](#).

Details

The scale of the Local Council boundary dataset is 1:2,500.

4.18 X_COR

Definition

Each building is geo-referenced using co-ordinates on the Irish Grid. Before the building has been surveyed the address will be given a temporary X_COR by the creator of the address. When LPS survey the building the permanent co-ordinate is collected. The value is held at 1 metre accuracy.

Constraints

Population of this field is mandatory.

4.19 Y_COR

Definition

Each building is geo-referenced using co-ordinates on the Irish Grid. Before the building has been surveyed the address will be given a temporary Y_COR by the creator of the address. When LPS survey the building the permanent co-ordinate is collected. The value is held at 1 metre accuracy.

Constraints

Population of this field is mandatory.

4.20 TEMP_COORDS

Definition

Indication as to whether the [X_COR](#) and [Y_COR](#) are permanent (i.e. assigned during an LPS survey) or temporary. When an address is created by a Local Council this field will be populated with a 'Y'. When it is made permanent, by an LPS surveyor, it will have a 'NULL' value.

Constraints

Population of this field is optional.

Can only be 'Y' or 'NULL' values.

Details

TEMP_COORDS status will be overwritten once the property has been surveyed.

4.21 BUILDING_STATUS

Definition

The current physical status of the building.

Constraints

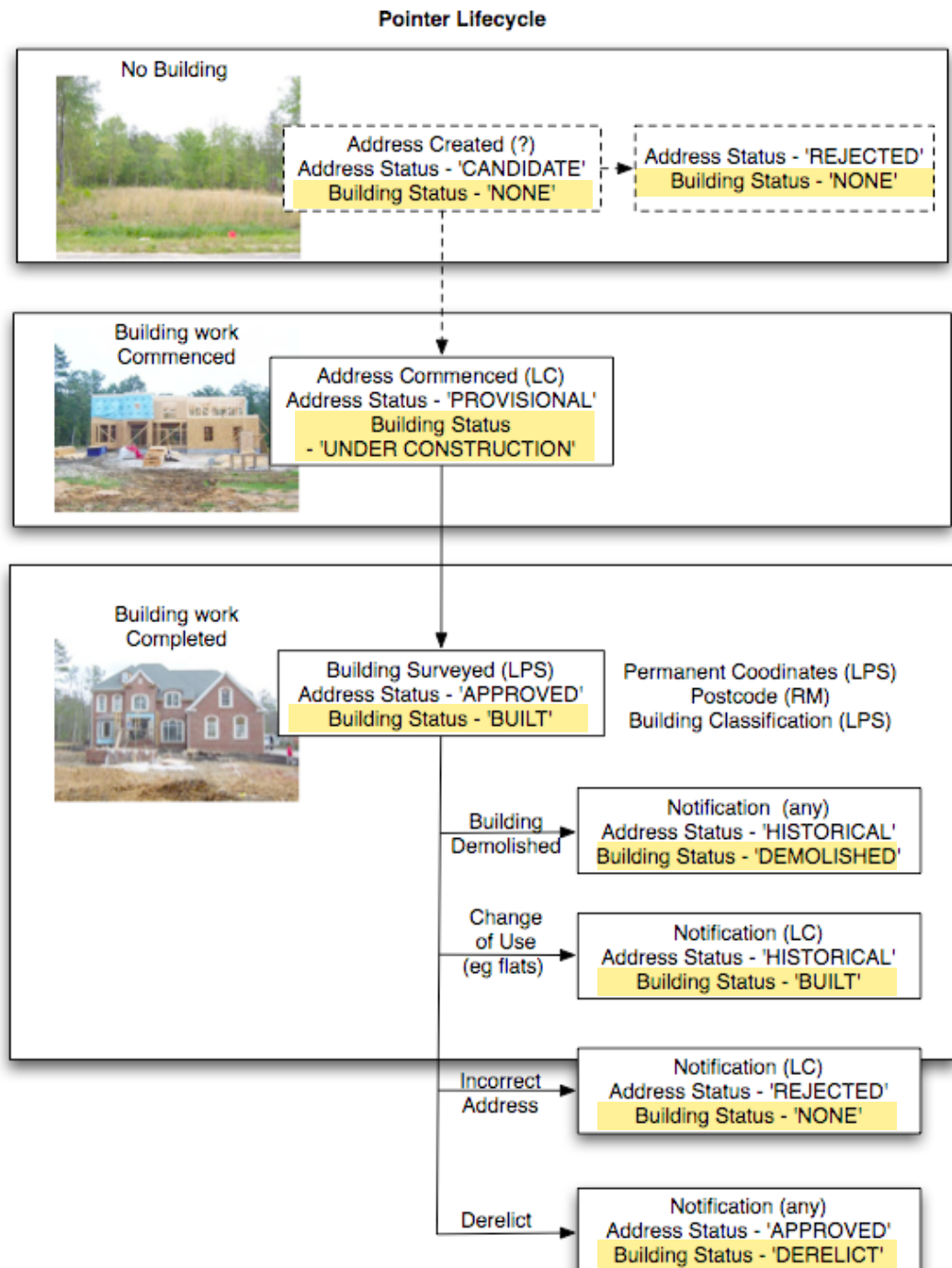
Population of this field is mandatory.

Permitted [PAO](#) Status values are:

None, Under Construction, Built, Derelict and Demolished

Details

This field reflects changes to the Building_Status.



4.22 ADDRESS_STATUS

Definition

The current logical status of the address.

Constraints

Permitted ADDRESS_STATUS values are: (See diagram above)

- Candidate - before building starts. Planning permission has been granted but building has not commenced. Created by the Local Council before building has begun.
- Provisional – The Local Council has confirmed that the building is under construction.
- Approved – LPS add permanent co-ordinates and/or a building classification. A Postcode may also be added however this does not affect the ADDRESS_STATUS
- Rejected – used to indicate the deletion of an incorrect address.
- Historical - addresses that are no longer in use due to dereliction, demolition etc.
- Population of this field is mandatory, and is system generated.

Details

Historical and Rejected addresses should be excluded from mail shots

4.23 CLASSIFICATION

Definition

The current use of the building, derived from the LPS classification.

Constraints

Data in this field is system generated.

Permitted CLASSIFICATION values are:

- NULL – Where the record has not yet been updated with an LPS classification.
- Commercial - commercial, entertainment & recreational, public utilities, educational & cultural, industrial & freight transport, miscellaneous (public), agricultural, horticultural, forestry
- Residential – where an individual is operating a business from a room within their home, LPS still classify this as a Residential property.

Details

When the building use of an addressable object changes, the CLASSIFICATION field will be updated from the LPS Valuation List to reflect this change. This field will be populated by a more detailed list based on the VLA classification, agreed by the Stakeholder Forum early in 2009.

4.24 CREATION_DATE

Definition

The date when an address is first entered into the system by the Local Council.

Constraints

This field will only be populated for records created after the Pointer application went live in 2005. The field is automatically populated.

4.25 COMMENCEMENT_DATE

Definition

This is the date when construction on the property has begun.

Constraints

This field will be populated for records created after the release of the new Pointer Product and when Local Council informs Pointer of the fact.

Details

This indicates when the [BUILDING_STATUS](#) changes from 'NONE' to 'UNDER CONSTRUCTION'

4.26 ARCHIVED_DATE

Definition

This is the date when the address is deemed to be no longer in use.

Constraints

This field is system generated.

Details

This indicates when the [ADDRESS_STATUS](#) becomes 'HISTORICAL'

4.27 ACTION

Definition

This field is only populated in the update product to denote the nature of a change, and is system generated.

Constraints

Permitted ACTION values are:

Insert (I) Indicates a new address created since the last download

Update (U) Indicates any change that has occurred since the last update i.e. a change to any field in the Pointer address (excluding Rejected)

Rejected (R) Indicates the deletion of an incorrect address.

Details

This field will be blank in the full product.

APPENDIX I: USE OF IRISH AND ULSTER SCOTS IN POINTER

THE USE OF IRISH IN OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Introduction

The Linguistic Diversity Branch within the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure ([DCALNI](#)) has prepared draft guidelines for the use of Irish in official business under the Council of Europe Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

The UK Government Signed the Charter on 2nd March 2000, recognising Irish, Scots Gaidhlig, Welsh, Ulster-Scots and Scots as languages to which the general principles of non-discrimination apply.

The Government ratified the Charter on 27th March 2001 and the Charter came into force on 2nd July 2001, bringing with it certain obligations regarding the use of Irish.

Personal Names

The Guidelines indicate that a person is legally entitled to assume any name he or she wishes – in English or in any other language. However, personal names will not be included in Pointer unless used as a Business Name.

Addresses

The Guidelines indicate that:

“A Council may place a version of a street name in another language alongside the English name..... When a person has used a lawful Irish language street name staff should use the Irish form in replying to correspondence, processing, applications etc. They should note both versions on the official record.

Where third parties may be involved i.e. where a document may need to be scrutinised (e.g. driving licence) or publicised (e.g. planning application) the English form of the street address should be shown as well as the Irish version. Where it is not technically possible to show both, the English version only should be shown. There are no restrictions on using Irish versions of other parts of an address e.g. townland, town, county, country.”

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1995

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1995 authorises Councils to erect street nameplates and states that those nameplates:

Shall express the name of the street in English; and

May express the name in any other language.

Therefore Councils now have the option to erect nameplates in any other language but only in addition to English.

However, the Order goes on to state:

“Neither this Article nor anything done by a council thereunder authorises or requires the use of the name of a street expressed in a language other than English as, or as part of:

The address of any person; or

The description of any land; for the purposes of any statutory provision.”

Conclusions

Under current legislation, the street name adopted by a local Council in Northern Ireland is the legal street name. The legislation also indicates that while Councils may erect non-English street name signs, these can only be in addition to the official English street name signs.

A number of councils in Northern Ireland have adopted Irish and Ulster-Scots street names.

The Guidelines being prepared by the Linguistic Diversity Branch of the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure clearly indicate that when a person has used a lawful Irish language street name, staff should use the Irish form in any official reply.

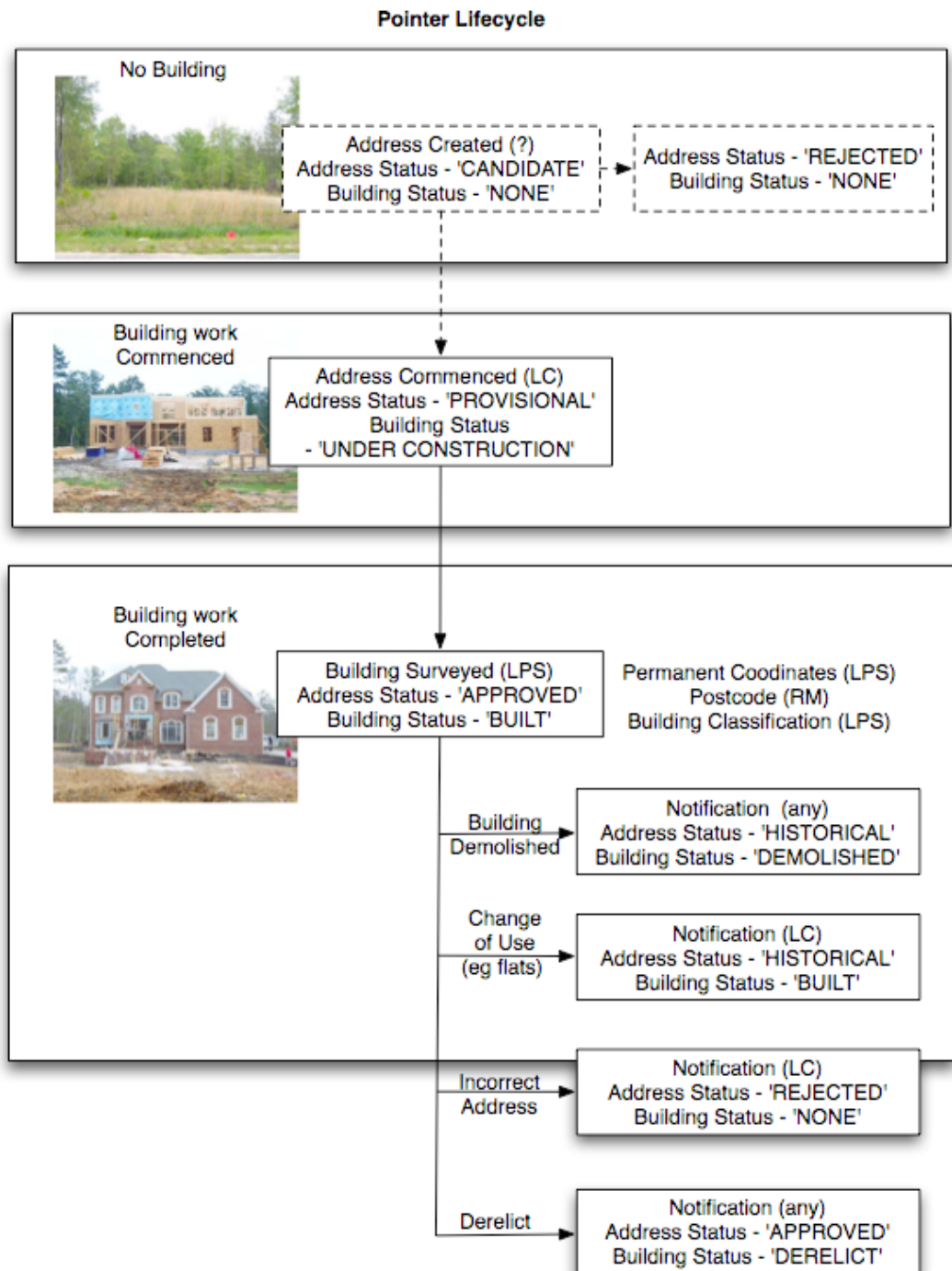
Therefore, Pointer should only include the official PRIMARY_THORFARE_NAME and/or SECONDARY_THORFARE_NAME form of an address. This will be as adopted by the relevant local Council. Various language versions are catered for by using the alternative name fields described within this specification. Where Irish or Ulster Scots street names are considered the legal form, the English version must also be included in Pointer, as an ALT_THORFARE_NAME1 value.

APPENDIX II: LOCAL COUNCILS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Antrim Borough Council
Armagh Borough Council
Ballymoney Borough Council
Belfast City Council
Castlereagh Borough Council
Cookstown District Council
Derry City Council
Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council
Larne Borough Council
Lisburn Borough Council
Moyle District Council
Newtownabbey Borough Council
Omagh District Council
Ards Borough Council
Ballymena Borough Council
Banbridge Borough Council
Carrickfergus Borough Council
Coleraine Borough Council
Craigavon Borough Council
Down District Council
Fermanagh District Council
Limavady Borough Council
Magherafelt District Council
Newry and Mourne District Council
North Down Borough Council
Strabane District Council

APPENDIX III: POINTER ADDRESS LIFECYCLE

A key feature of the Pointer system is the implementation of the address lifecycle through a set of BUILDING and ADDRESS_STATUS indicators. These reflect the progress of address completion.



APPENDIX IV: USING POINTER

Pointer is supplied in Comma Separated Value (CSV) file format.

The file naming convention is Council_DateCreated_Frequency.csv (e.g. BMENA_20081030_M.csv). The data is available as a full product or an updates only product. The updates are available at a frequency of daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly and a 90 day rolling updates product will be available to all customers.

TO USE WITHIN ESRI ARCMAP

To add Pointer as a table. Click the add data button. Browse to the Pointer.csv file and click add.

To display as points. Right click on pointer and select Display X, Y data. On the next dialogue box ensure X_COR is selected for the X Field box and Y_COR is selected for the Y Field box. Click OK.

TO USE WITHIN MAPINFO

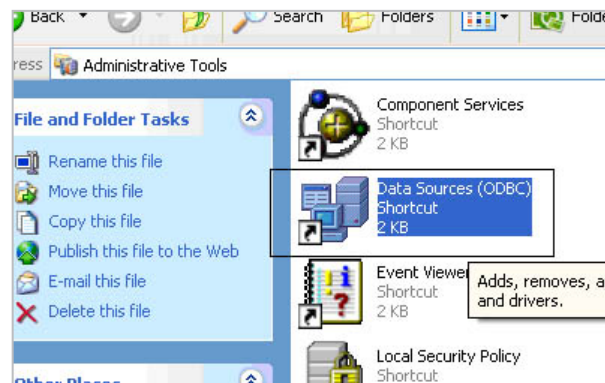
Click the Open existing table or workspace table button. Select CSV from the filetype dropdown list, browse to the Pointer.csv file, select and click Open. In the next dialogue box check the box for Use First Line for Column Titles. This will display the Pointer Table.

To display as a series of points, from the menu bar select Table > Create Points. Select the X_COR field from the Get X Coordinates dropdown list and Y_COR for the Y Coordinates. Click the Projection button and then select Irish Coordinate Systems from the Category dropdown list. Select Irish Transverse Mercator Grid in the lower box and click OK, and the OK again.. Click the open new mapper button to see points displayed.

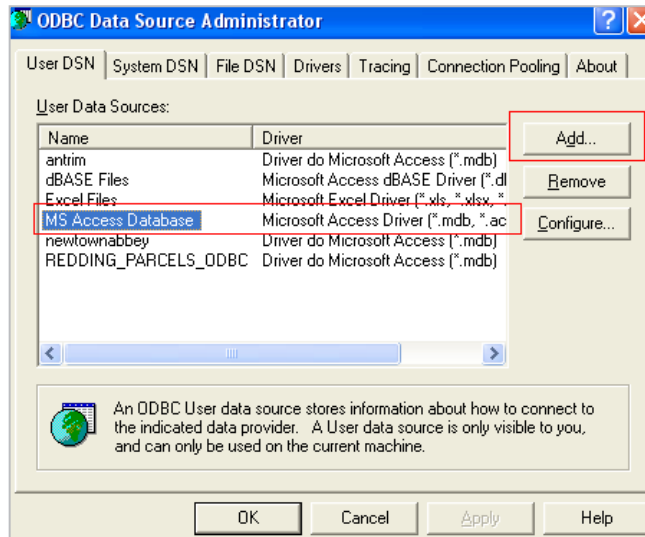
TO USE WITHIN AUTOCAD

To bring Pointer data into Autocad. The data needs to be in an access database, so simply import the CSV data into Access as an external table. Save and close your Access database.

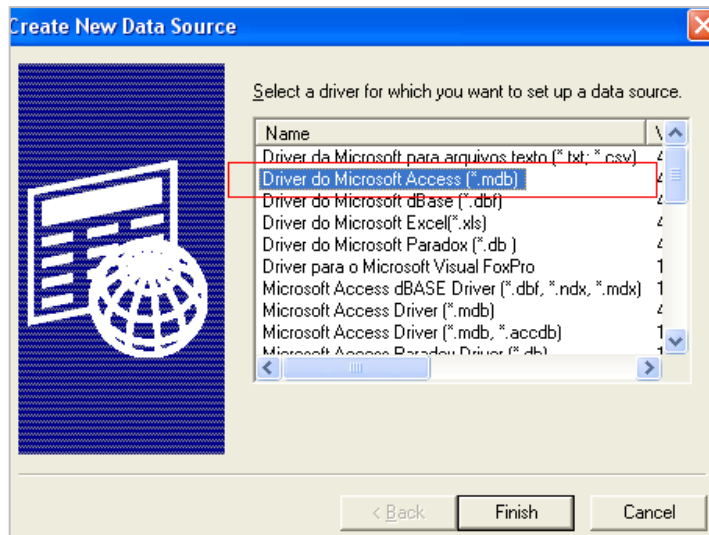
Go to the control panel and administrator tools and then double click on data sources ODBC as shown:



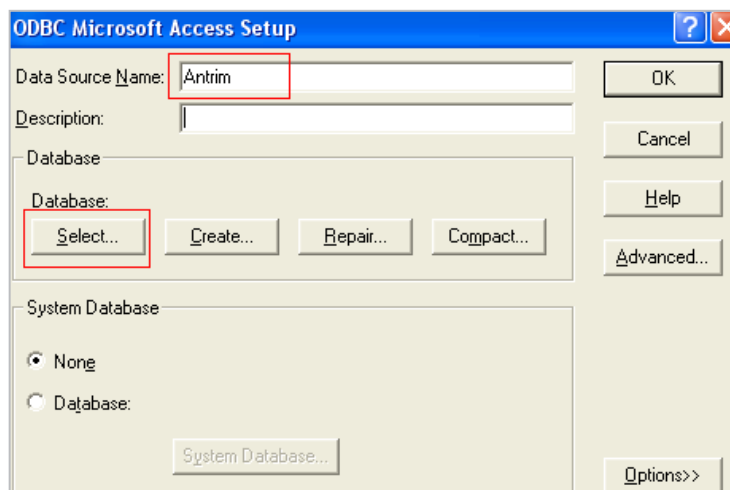
Add a new Access database as shown:



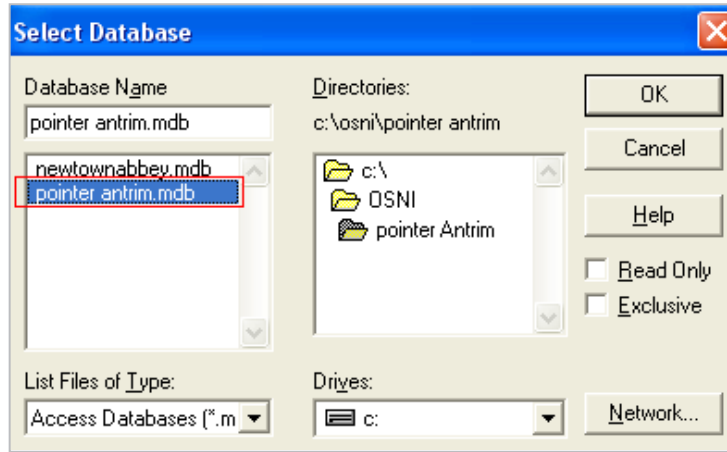
Use the mdb driver:



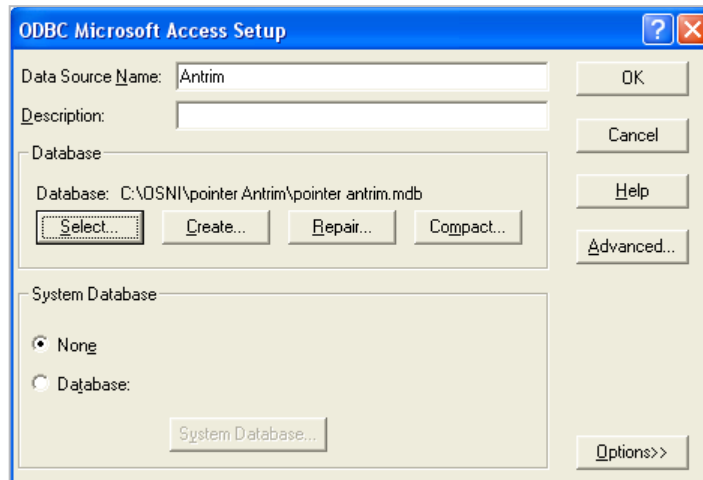
Give the file a data source name. Note this does not have to be the same as the filename.



Then select the database form the directory structure:



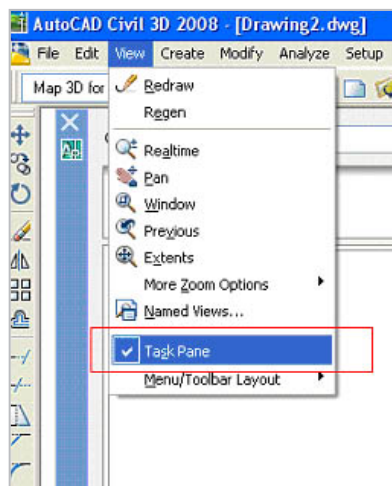
Once selected pick okay:



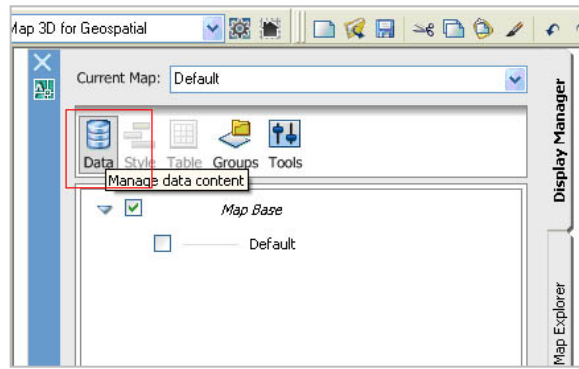
This defines the database.

The datasource name is important ie "Antrim" in the example above. Keep a note of what it was called.

Open AutoCAD Map and activate the task pane:

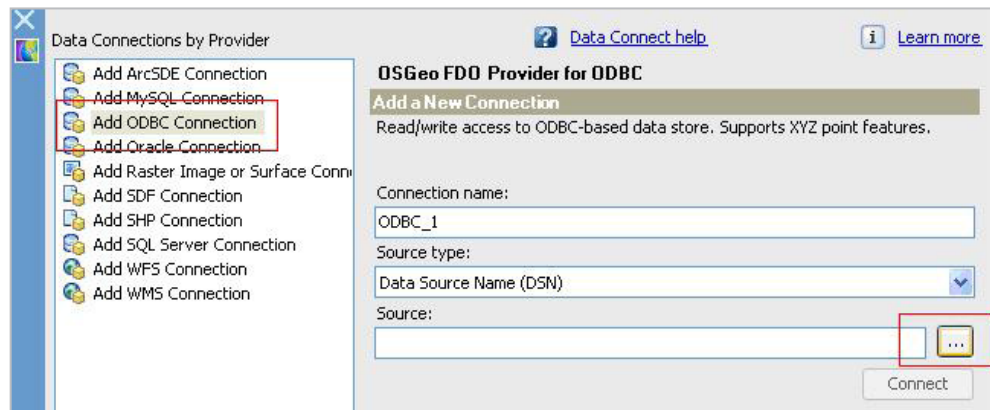


On the task pane window and select the data button (Manage data content).



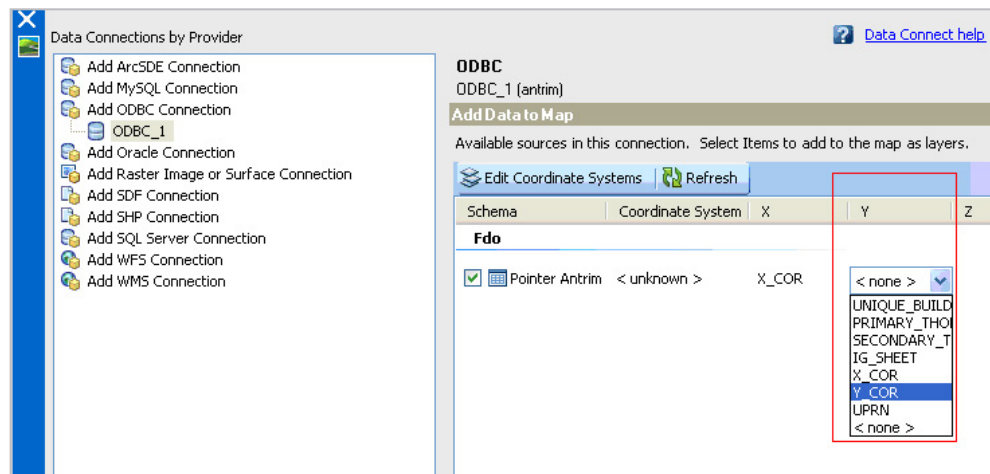
Select Add ODBC connection and select the source of the file named earlier, "Antrim" in the example.

Please note this is not the actual name of the file, but the shortcut name you created as an ODBC connection earlier.



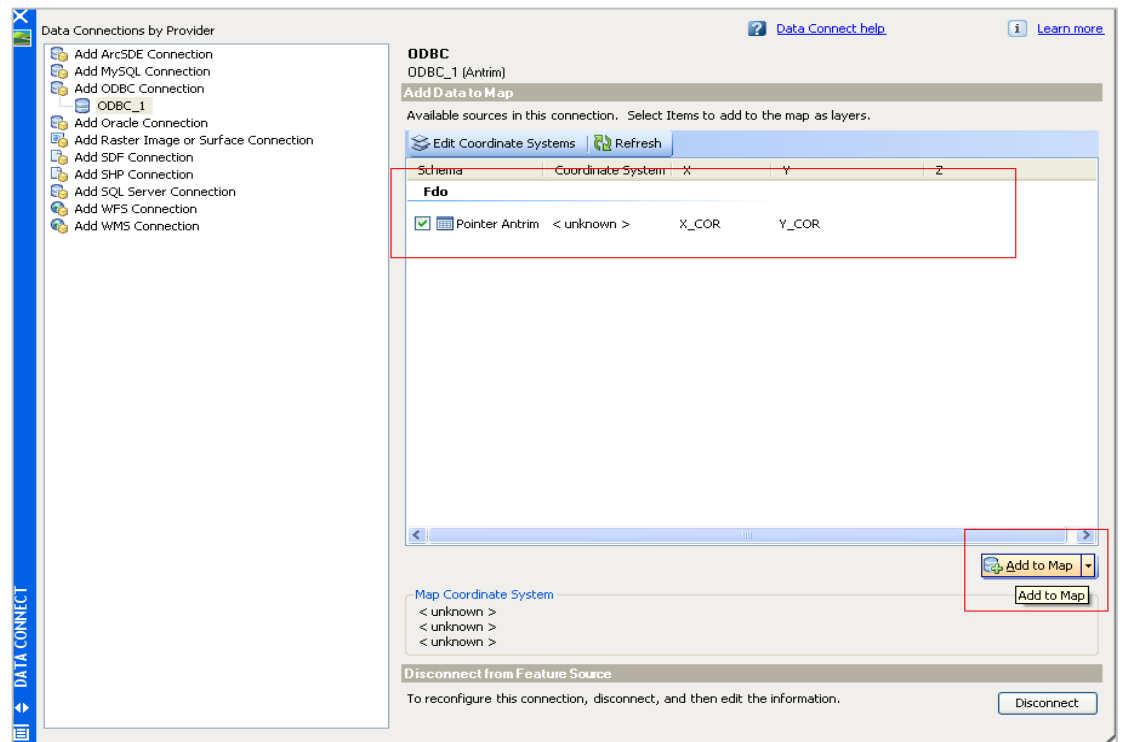
Accept login (no credentials required)

Tick the box next to the pointer data and then specify the column name, to use for x and y coordinates. Click in the field then click the down arrow to choose from a list of column names. Ensure the columns are wide enough to display the dropdown list.



Click Add To Map.

If the Add To Map button is greyed, check that you have specified the coordinate system (Irish Grid) and X and Y columns for the table.



The data will appear on the screen. Don't forget the styles can be changed, queried and converted to SDF format.

TO USE WITHIN CADCORP

Select Map, Add, Database Overlay, View Points, Direct from file (browse to the Pointer .csv file), Select Table, Add selected columns, Specify X and Y fields, Finish.

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